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A photograph of the only Wood Turtle shell to be found in the State of Iowa since 1946.

The Endangered and Uncommon Amphibians and Reptiles of Iowa

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Introduction

Iowa has 23 amphibian and reptilian species whose known populations or ranges within the state are so small as to justify their inclusion in the state's endangered or threatened list (Roosa, 1977). This paper is intended to inform the Iowa scientific teaching community of the plight of these species and to recruit help in gathering information relative to their distribution. Most of the information presented here has been accumulated by Christiansen and Bailey (manuscripts in preparation or in press) in their work on the amphibians and reptiles of Iowa.

Science teachers can be of help in generating information pertaining to Iowa fauna through examination of specimens provided by students for identification, acquaintance with collections of local animals maintained by students, and collection of specimens killed on the road or observation of living animals in the field. When a specimen of a rare or endangered species comes to the attention of an instructor, it can be used to illustrate problems of species extinction and habitat destruction often related to man's activity. It should be noted that the maps presented here do not represent known ranges but only suggest where these species might be found. This paper should acquaint Iowa science teachers with the identification and potential distribution of the state's rare or endangered amphibians and reptiles. Additional information concerning these or other Iowa amphibians and reptiles is most easily found in Conant (1975).

Since the animals discussed here are rare and are protected in Iowa, we request that no living individuals be removed from their environment or killed. Road killed specimens *no matter how mutilated or decayed* or others that are injured by accident are extremely valuable to science and should be frozen in a plastic bag with a tag bearing the exact locality and date found. Photographs of living specimens are of great value and with locality and date, will provide adequate proof of the animal's existence. Notes describing the habitat of the animal or other things of interest concerning it can also be of use. Information concerning these species should be sent to Dr. Christiansen at the above address or to Dean M. Roosa, Ecologist, The Iowa Conservation Commission, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. We will attempt to pick up frozen specimens as soon as possible after being notified.